

HOLLYWOOD

HOLLYWOOD is 100 years old and the champagne, the glitter and the stars are out in force to give the tinseltown a year-long event to remember.

The big bash kicked off when Natalie Wood was given a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

This was followed by legends Bob Hope, Gene Autrey and Jimmy Stewart presenting a letter from actor-turned-President Ronald Reagan, an Oscar statuette and a piece of the Hollywood sign for a special Hollywood time capsule.

The festivities wound up with a celebrity-studded party complete with 2m-high birthday cake at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel.

This was the hotel where Gable courted Lombard, where Gary Cooper had his affairs and where Bogart and Bacall danced and dined.

Hollywood, dubbed everything from Tinseltown to the Dream Factory, is described as the rhinestone buckle in the southern California sun belt.

It is 48ha bounded by Whitley, Gower, Hollywood Boulevard, Vine St and Franklin and Sunset Boulevard.

Today, Hollywood represents movie magic, illusion, fantasy and scandal, but when it was founded by prohibitionist Harvey Wilcox and his wife, Daidea, it was to be a God-fearing town where alcohol, saloons and loose living were unknown.

Wilcox and his wife came to California by train and bought the 48ha which was then known as Caluenga Valley — they promptly renamed it Hollywood.

One story has it that Hollywood was named after a woman Daidea had met on the train out in Chicago, who had a summer house with the same name.

Notorious and infamous

Another has it that Daidea loved Mary Queen of Scots and named the valley, with its orange trees and desert flowers, after the Scottish royal palace, Holyrood House, but got Holyrood wrong and spelt it Hollywood.

Either way, the Wilcoxes never foresaw that the land they bought and recorded for subdivision in 1887 would become as famous as Paris, London and New York and as infamous and notorious as Germany's Rieperbahn.

And, according to their descendant, 63-year-old David Brunson, a real estate developer, they would not have approved.

"If Daidea drove down Hollywood Boulevard today I think

Tinseltown's dream turned to nightmare

she'd just shake her head," says Mr Brunson.

He points out that the Hollywood of the dream factory is, in fact, very different from the Hollywood of reality — a seedy, often sleazy, carnival town that has echoes of the 1960s Kings Cross of Sydney.

It shouts sleaze rather than glamor, tack rather than magic.

Hollywood began its life a clean-living town not unlike the adjacent Beverly Hills.

It had wide boulevards, trees, rolling hills, endless sunshine and, while holly wouldn't grow, oranges, avocados, pepper trees and bougainvillea did.

Then at the turn of the century flickers were invented . . . moving pictures.

The patent for the first movies were in the hands of inventor Thomas Edison.

Glove maker Sam Goldwyn and handsome young men with dreams, such as D.W. Griffiths, wanted to be involved in this new business.

It fascinated them, but they refused to pay patents and they were fed up with New York's uncertain weather.

California, with hours of sunshine and endless space, was the answer and Holly-

wood was the town they chose. Daidea Wilcox lived long enough to see moving pictures come to Hollywood — she died in 1917 — but she was not around long enough to see Hollywood's respectability and sobriety become a free for all for the young, the beautiful, the reckless, the headstrong and the famous.

Movies gave birth to dreams and created fabulously wealthy stars. The first were Mary Pickford, Lillian Gish, Theda Bara and Charlie Chaplin.

Beautiful and reckless

These were quickly followed by many more . . . Rudolf Valentino, Pola Negri, John Gilbert, the Marx brothers and a Swedish beauty named Greta Garbo.

Hollywood resembled a gold-rush town, where big money, ambition and beauty combined to give the new stars and their mogul bosses — Cecil B. De Mille, the powerful Louis B. Mayer, the hated Harry Cohn and Sam Goldwyn — a life where they made their own rules and where parties lasted not just all night but for days.

became more beloved, more admired and more intriguing than European and British royalty.

These men and women were known everywhere, across the US to Australia to Africa, even into China.

They included stars like Garbo, heroes like Gary Cooper, Gene Autrey, John Wayne, beauties like Rita Hayworth, Grace Kelly, Marilyn Monroe and Elizabeth Taylor, heart-throbs like Rudolf Valentino and Clark Gable.

Hollywood made household names of Australians Errol Flynn, Peter Finch and most recently, Mel Gibson and Paul Hogan.

Few studios are in Hollywood these days, only Para-



Many dreamed of movie stardom, but only a few survived the climb to the top.

HURRAY for Hollywood and the great prizes being given away by the Daily Sun this week to celebrate 100 years of Hollywood. Today you have the chance to win one of six gold passes compliments of Greater Union cinemas — the passes are valid for three months.

Don't miss out on your chance to get a taste of Hollywood. Fill out the coupon on page 14 and tomorrow you could win a collection of Hollywood books from QBD autographed by TV's *Golden Years of Hollywood* host Bill Collins.

Why Bing Crosby wore gum

IF you're into Tinseltown and movie trivia here's a list of interesting facts which will add another dimension to your general knowledge.

1. *Over the Rainbow* was almost cut from *The Wizard of Oz* because it slowed the pace.

2. Walter Brennan got his start in 1923 when he did a voice-over for a donkey who refused to bray on cue.

3. Walt Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937) was the first full-length animated feature film.

4. Vivien Leigh earned a paltry \$15,000 for her performance of Scarlett O'Hara in *Gone With the Wind*.

5. As a child Shirley Temple reportedly earned more than \$20 million for 20th Century Fox.

6. Bing Crosby used to have his cauliflower ears pinned back with gum by make-up artists.

7. During the Great Depression, film studios averaged 50 films a year.

8. Clark Gable proposed to Carole Lombard in Booth 5 at the Hollywood Brown Derby. She said yes.

9. Joan Crawford once danced the Charleston on a tabletop in a nightclub in a bid to break into the movies.

10. Douglas Fairbanks was master of ceremonies at the first Oscar ceremony held in

Hollywood in 1929. A ticket costs \$5.

11. Hollywood was founded by a farmer from Topeka, Kansas, called Horace Wilcox when he bought a tract of land in the Caluenga Valley.

12. The ranch got its name when Mrs Wilcox met a woman who described her summer home in Illinois and the holly bushes which surrounded it. She liked the description so much she christened her L.A. ranch Hollywood.

13. Hollywood first turned commercial in 1887 when Wilcox filed a map for subdivision.

14. Tinseltown's first movie studio — the Nestor Film Company — started operating on Sunset Boulevard in 1911.

15. Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks and Norma Talmadge were the first stars to put their footprints into the cement at Graumann's Chinese Theatre in 1927.

16. Betty Grable's legprint and Jimmy Durante's noseprint are also immortalised in cement.

17. Charlie Chaplin earned \$1 million in 1917 from *First National* for one year's work. But four years earlier he was making \$130 as a Keystone Kop.

18. As part of the war effort the Oscars were made from plaster and painted with gold paint.

19. The first film to top \$100 million in ticket sales was *Jaws*.

Fame weaves deadly trail

HOLLYWOOD has had its casualties.

Fatty Arbuckle, moviedom's favorite comic was arrested for rape and murder of a 25-year-old starlet, Virginia Rappe.

Rappe died after a three-day party and while Arbuckle got off, his career was over and he died broke 12 years later.

Director William Desmond was murdered and child star — touted as the new Mary Pickford — Mary Miles Minter was implicated.

Mary Astor had a wild affair with playwright George S. Kaufman and had her sizzling diary read in court as part of the evidence in a scandalous divorce brought by her outraged husband.

Starlets unable to make it in Hollywood took their lives by leaping off the famous Hollywood sign — a sign that was

originally called Hollywood-land and was the proud name of a subdivision in the 1920s.

The welter of booze, drugs, free love, all day and night parties continued as Hollywood became richer and more powerful.

Scandals

Millions became hooked on going to the pictures and movies became not just a passing fad, but here to stay.

Hollywood is the ultimate soap opera and its residents, its love affairs and its scandals have kept more than four generations entertained.

Hollywood also gave the world idols and superstars to adore, men and women who

became more beloved, more admired and more intriguing than European and British royalty.

These men and women were known everywhere, across the US to Australia to Africa, even into China.

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mount and part of the Warners complex.

Few movie stars now live in Hollywood and despite the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel undergoing restoration and a facelift to bring it back to its 1930s glory, Hollywood remains sleazy, tacky and more a state of mind than a glamorous city.

Driving down Hollywood streets you are more likely to see hookers and drug pushers mixed with eager tourists than any celebrity or any glamor.

But Hollywood exudes magic and the city which turns 100 this year is as much an illusion and a dream as the films and the stars it gave birth to.

Tomorrow: Hollywood's male heart throbs